

ON THE BALLOT THIS NOVEMBER

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE MINNESOTA CONSTITUTION

By Mayor Gene Winstead

THE GENERAL ELECTION WILL BE HELD Tuesday, November 7. It is important for voters to learn about issues and candidates so that they can make informed choices when going to the polls. One of the issues on the ballot is related to the motor vehicle sales tax.

The 2005 Minnesota Legislature authorized the Transportation Constitutional Amendment that asks voters to decide about future transportation investments.

When purchasing a new vehicle, Minnesotans currently pay a motor vehicle sales tax. At this time, 54 percent of the motor vehicle sales tax revenue is used for funding highways and transit; the remaining 46 percent goes into the general fund for other state programs.

Next month, voters will be asked to vote on a constitutional amendment that would direct 100 percent of the revenue from the existing motor vehicle sales tax



VOTE "YES" OR "NO"

"Shall the Minnesota Constitution be amended to dedicate revenue from a tax on the sale of new and used motor vehicles over a five-year period, so that after June 30, 2011, all of the revenue is dedicated at least 40 percent for public transit assistance and not more than 60 percent for highway purposes."

to improve Minnesota's highways and public transportation systems. The amendment would require that at least 40 percent of the motor vehicle sales tax revenue go toward public transit and no more than 60 percent to highways. The bottom line will be more funds for both transit and state highways.

If the amendment passes, funds would gradually be shifted from the state's general fund to transportation over a five-year period beginning in 2007. New revenue for transportation improvements would total more than \$300 million per year.

To pass a constitutional amendment, the state requires approval by a majority of people who vote. **It is important to note that if a voter leaves the question blank on the ballot, it will be counted as a "no" vote.**

In the coming weeks, talk about this issue with your family, friends and neighbors. Discussions invite varying views that are vital to the decision-making process and ultimately results in more informed voters.

2007 GENERAL FUND BUDGET

COUNCIL APPROVES PRELIMINARY BUDGET AND LEVY

THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVED A preliminary general operating fund budget of \$49,664,800, a 5.16 percent increase from the 2006 budget of \$47,226,472.

The increase for City services to a Bloomington resident with a median-

value home of \$244,800 would be \$2.07 per month in 2007 for a monthly payment of \$62.57. The median-valued home averaged a 6 percent increase in market value in 2006, up

\$13,600 from 2005. Because the total value of city property increased, the overall tax capacity rate for the City will decrease for taxes payable in 2007.

The \$2.07 monthly increase resulted from the approval of a preliminary levy of \$40,361,795 for 2007, a 5.75 percent increase from 2006, in part, to anticipate the possible loss of market value credit from the state in 2007. The Council established the levy to help offset these potential losses.

The preliminary levy can be reduced, but not increased, before final adoption in December. This allows the City to have a better understanding of the potential for a state reduction in Market Value Credit

during the 2007 Legislative Session based on the projected financial conditions in the state's November economic forecast. If the 2007 levy increase is approved, the average annual increase in the City's levy from 1994 - 2007 will be 3.36 percent.

City staff uses a five-year planning model that considers both short-term and future needs of our community to recommend a preliminary levy.

The Truth in Taxation Hearing is Monday, December 4, at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Only Tap Water DeliversSM

I WANT TO BE HERE FOR YOU.

If only our water infrastructure could talk. The corner hydrant might remind us that tap water protects us against the threat of fire and that the pipes below our streets need constant attention to keep life-saving water flowing at the right pressure, 24/7, without fail. We are all stewards of the water infrastructure; our water bill payments keep that system strong and reliable. For more information about what your tap water delivers, call 952-563-4905 or visit www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: Water treatment.



SAFE FROM THE HYDRANT

FIRE PROTECTION

A WELL-MAINTAINED WATER SYSTEM IS critical to protecting our communities from the threat of fire.

- In 2004, U.S. fire departments responded to 1.55 million fires across the country.
- Community water systems were first built not to deliver safe drinking water, but to fight fires.
- In Bloomington, water flowing to fire hydrants and home faucets is transported by the same system of water mains, pumps and storage tanks.
- A water system that provides reliable water at a high pressure and volume can be the difference between a manageable fire and an urban inferno.



- Firefighters are the primary operators of fire hydrants, but our utilities division maintains the hydrants that are supported through our water bills.
- Twice a year, the City's Utilities Division inspects approximately 5,000 public and private water hydrants to ensure that they will perform properly and reliably in an emergency.

ON TAP NEXT ISSUE:

A safe reliable, water supply – central to our community's economic success.

Presented in cooperation with



BRIEFING

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The Briefing, published bimonthly by the City of Bloomington, is mailed to our residents and businesses. Direct comments and requests for Braille, larger print or computer disk to Communications Administrator Diann Kirby, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Rd., Bloomington MN 55431-3027; PH 952-563-8818; TTY 952-563-8740; FAX 952-563-8715; E-MAIL dkirby@ci.bloomington.mn.us.

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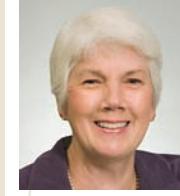
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